Takarazuka fans: Psychological distance and social media

Associate Professor Megumi Okugiri
Department of International Studies, University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo

The Takarazuka Revue is a Japanese all-female musical theatre troupe and 90% of their fans are women. As such, gender is a very salient component (Nakamoto, 2011). The performances are also famous for 2.5 dimension musicals (musicals based on manga) and are expected to be artificial in terms of content and characters. In particular, about a half of the performers are otokoyaku, meaning women actors performing the male roles.

This is a case study illustrating how fans use social media as twitter or blogs and the effect of the psychological distance on use. The data is based on an interview with a female fan who has been supporting Takarazuka otokoyaku actors for 21 years. The interview data exhibits the relationship between a fan’s psychological distance to their favorite actors and the frequency of their social media use, which is inversely proportional. This phenomenon may be due to a unique and distinctive feeling similar to parental love or a child-rearing game toward an otokoyaku actor from a Takarazuka fan (Nakamoto, 2009). Fans expect that their favorite otokoyaku actor will become more masculine on stage and enjoy observing or influencing how actors perform and become better and sexier otokoyaku, but they expect the actors stay feminine off stage. Otokoyaku actors are possibly highly influenced by the fans who support the actors as a man on stage, while simultaneously supporting them as a woman off stage (Miyamoto, 2011).

Event Details

Date:
Thursday 15 March 2018

Time:
1pm - 4pm

Venue:
Room 321, Level 3
Sidney Myer Asia Centre
The University of Melbourne
Parkville VIC 3010

Enquiries:
cmaree@unimelb.edu.au

Bookings:
Not required.